Hemingway’s Spain: Imagining the Spanish World

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Hemingway’s Spain

Imagining
the Spanish World

Edited by Carl P. Eby
and Mark Cirino

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Contents

Acknowledgments ix

Introduction: Imagining Spain
Carl P. Eby and Mark Cirino 1

1. Hemingway in the Dirt of a Blood and Soil Myth
   María DeGuzmán 9

2. Ernest Hemingway—¿Amigo de España?
   Lisa Twomey 28

3. Allegories of Travel and Tourism in “Hills Like White Elephants”
   Russ Pottle 44

4. Hemingway and Franklin: Men Without Women
   Ian Grody 65

5. A Creative Spiral: From Death in the Afternoon (1932)
   to The Dangerous Summer (1960)
   Beatriz Penas Ibáñez 77

6. Bulls, Art, Mithras, and Montherlant
   Ben Stoltzfus 98

7. “At Five in the Afternoon”: Toward a Poetics of Duende
   in Bataille and Hemingway
   David F. Richter 113

8. “It was all there . . . but he could not see it”:
   What’s Dangerous about The Dangerous Summer
   Suzanne del Gizzo 128

9. Hemingway’s Spain in Flames, 1937
   James H. Meredith 146
   Mark P. Ott  
   152

11. The Education of Henry: Politics and Context in Hemingway  
   Scott D. Yarbrough  
   162

12. Foreign Bodies: Documenting Expatriate Involvement in “Night Before Battle” and “Under the Ridge”  
   Michael Maiwald  
   174

13. Bulls and Bells: Their Toll on Robert Jordan  
   Lawrence R. Broer  
   192

Index  

214
In December 1921, a young Ernest Hemingway en route to France with his new bride, Hadley, wrote from aboard the S.S. *Leopoldina* to his old fishing buddy Bill Smith about a brief stopover in the northwestern corner of the Iberian Peninsula: “Vigo, Spain. That’s the place for a male. . . . Gaw what a place.”

A harbor almost landlocked about as big as Little Traverse Bay with big, brown, mountains. A male can buy a lateen sailed boat for 5 seeds. Costs a seed a day at the Grand Hotel and the bay swarms with *Tuna*. They behave exactly like lainsteins—sardines for shiners—chase them the same way and I saw 3 in the air at once—1 easily 8 feet. The biggest one they’ve taken this year weighed 850 lbs!

Vigo’s about 4 times the size of the Voix and there are three or four little places around the bay to sail to. . . . Trout streams in the Mts. Tuna in the bay. Green water to swim in and sandy beaches. Vino is 2 peseta a qt. for the 3 year old which can be distinguished by a blue label. Cognac is 4 pesetas a litre.

Little wonder Hemingway promised, “We’re going back there” (*Letters* 312).

It wasn’t his first taste of Spain—he had spent three days in Gibraltar and Algericas on his way home from World War I in January 1919—but it was his first declaration of love for a country that for him would remain a lifelong passion, and the terms in which he expresses his enthusiasm are worth noting. There is, of course, the love of landscape, fishing, swimming, drinking, and grand hotels
that featured so prominently in his life and work—Spain as a paradise for a
“male”—but what is perhaps more interesting is that Hemingway somehow
imagines Spain in terms of northern Michigan, where he spent all but one of
the summers of his youth. The Ria de Vigo is like Petoskey’s Little Traverse
Bay; Vigo itself is like Charlevoix (although four times bigger); and the tuna
are just much bigger versions of Michigan’s lake trout (lainsteins, a variation
on rainsteins, or rainbow trout in Ernest’s patois). We might speculate that
such comparisons were for the benefit of his Michigan pal, yet when, on the
slender evidence of his four-hour stay, he wrote a story on Vigo for the Toronto
Star, he not only describes the tuna fishing but also writes with the authority
of a Michigan angler about the fishing in the mountains above Vigo, “where
the good fishermen will go when snow drifts along the northern streams and
tROUT lie nose to nose in deep pools under a scUM of ice,” and the tuna still are
imagined in these familiar terms: “Sometimes five and six tuna will be in the
air at once in Vigo Bay, shoulDERing out of the water like porpoises as they herd
the sardines, then leaping in a towering jump that is as clean and beautiful as
the first leap of a well-hooked rainbow” (Dateline 92). Although colored by
the romance of the foreign, Vigo, for Hemingway, somehow was home.

Hemingway, of course, is famous for his adopted homes—first Michigan,
then Italy, France, Spain, Key West, Kenya, Cuba, and Idaho—and of these,
none was more important to his imaginative universe than Spain. Indeed, Spain
provides a setting for no fewer than five of his major books—The Sun Also
Rises (1926), Death in the Afternoon (1932), For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940), The
Dangerous Summer (1985), and The Garden of Eden (1986)—not to mention the
bullfighting vignettes of In Our Time (1924); such stories as “Hills Like White
Elephants,” “The Undefeated,” “A Clean Well-Lighted Place,” and “The Capital of
the World”; his Spanish Civil War journalism; his only full-length play, The Fifth
Column (1938); and the documentary film on which he collaborated with John
Dos Passos and Joris Ivens, The Spanish Earth (1937). Though he stayed away
from Spain for fifteen years of his adult life, between 1938 and 1953, he called
Spain “the country that I loved more than any other except my own” (DS 43).
His forty-year love affair with the country spanned his career as a writer, and
the depth of his engagement with Spain—emotional, psychological, aesthetic,
literary, political, military, culinary, and religious—was rich and complex.

Given his affinity for Spain, it is perhaps worth noting that Hemingway
never actually resided there for any great length of time. All told, he spent about
three years of his life there—typically traveling in Spain for about a month or
two annually between 1923 and 1926 (the years leading up to publication of
The Sun Also Rises), with stays brief enough and breaks between visits long
enough to cultivate what Jeffrey Herlihy-Mera calls a perpetual “honeymoon” experience with the country characterized by “euphoria, enchantment, fascination and enthusiasm” (85). During the years leading up to publication of *Death in the Afternoon*, his stays were of longer duration punctuated by longer absences—with visits of three, three, and four months respectively in 1927, 1929, and 1931. After a two-month stay en route to Africa in 1933, Hemingway didn’t return until after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, when he spent another six months in Spain, in 1937 and 1938, working on *The Spanish Earth* and as a journalist for the North America Newspaper Alliance (NANA). After the war, committed to a self-imposed exile as long as his friends remained in Franco’s jails, Hemingway did not return to Spain until 1953, when he stayed for a month, returning again for visits of a month or two in 1954 and 1956. His last long visit to Spain came in the final years of his life, in 1959 and 1960, when he spent seven months in Spain working on *The Dangerous Summer*.2

Not that Hemingway lived for any great amount of time in several of his other adopted homes either. He probably spent more time in Spain than he spent in Italy, Kenya, and the mountains of the American West combined. For Hemingway, his adopted homes were often almost as much places of the imagination as places of earth, roots, and stone. As he explained in a passage he deleted from the galleys of *Death in the Afternoon*—a passage he later revised for *A Moveable Feast*—“The artist, like the cabbage . . . , needs transplanting,”3 and although he believed religiously in assiduous observation, he didn’t need to live in Spain to write about it any more than he needed to live in America to write about it. Local color writers, he asserted, might need to live in the place about which they wrote, but any writer who aspires to something more than local color, who “deals with the human heart, with the human mind and with the presence or absence of the human soul” can also “make the country, not merely describe it.” And to make the country, he builds from his self and his experience, often creating a hybrid country of the imagination, just as the young Ernest in *A Moveable Feast* transports the cold wind whipping past his Parisian café into the story he is writing of Michigan. This means that, for Hemingway, home was often as much the self found elsewhere—partaking of at least an element of projective identification—as it was a mere matter of careful observation, however vital that observation might also be.

The expatriate protagonists of Hemingway’s novels have an uncanny ability to fit in or feel at home wherever they roam. Though Americans in Europe, Jake Barnes, Frederic Henry, Robert Jordan, Richard Cantwell, and David Bourne always know the secret handshake of the insider without ever becoming truly one of the natives. When Robert Cohn in *The Sun Also Rises* responds to a
banner proclaiming “Hurray for the Foreigners!” by asking, “Where are the foreigners?” he may seem stupid—Bill’s reply, “We’re the foreigners,” certainly makes him seem that way—but marked by his afición, Jake doesn’t seem like such a foreigner in Spain (158). “Somehow it was taken for granted that an American could not have aficion,” he reflects. “He might simulate it or confuse it with excitement, but he could not really have it” (137). And yet Jake does have it: so clearly does he have it that Montoya asks him to protect the young bullfighter Romero from foreign predatory women . . . a few pages before Jake introduces Romero to Brett. In A Farewell to Arms, Frederic Henry wears the Italian uniform and serves with the Italian army, yet the priest reminds him that he is after all “a foreigner,” and the fact that “he speaks Italian with an accent” serves as an easy pretext during the retreat from Caporetto for the battle police to shoot him as a foreign infiltrator (71, 222). In For Whom the Bell Tolls, Robert Jordan’s accent is of Extremadura, not of his native Montana, but the college Spanish instructor is still told that “it is . . . presumptuous for a foreigner to teach Spanish,” and despite becoming a member of the symbolic family in the cave, he remains an outsider, an American Inglés (209). These protagonists all straddle the boundary between, or oscillate between, insider and outsider, occupying a strange liminal geography of the imagination. Hemingway’s own position wasn’t too different. Even in his boldest attempts to be an “insider” or “go native”—when he fibbed in his youth about having served with the Italian Arditi instead of the American Red Cross, when he established himself as a bullfight aficionado in Spain, or when, on safari in 1954, he shaved his head, dyed his clothes rusty Masai ochre, and began ceremonies (interrupted by his wife) for ritual ear piercing and facial scarification—he was responding to something in these countries and cultures that spoke to the needs of his own imagination, accommodating these countries to himself as much as he altered himself to accommodate the demands of these countries.

And Hemingway knew this. True, in a passage he deleted from galleys to the final chapter of Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway warns that Spain “is a strange country . . . and few people have ever gone to it to find it as they expected” (Gal to DIA 78). One has to observe both the country and one’s own reactions to it carefully and honestly, and one who does this is likely to be surprised. Yet in these same deleted passages he writes that “the heart of a country . . . assuredly does not exist. It is only your own heart, of course. . . .” (Gal to DIA 78).

As an American I know it is very presumptuous of me to write about Spain and I have avoided diagnosing her soul even though, sometimes, in the west of America you are in country that is physically so like Spain that where there
are no houses you could not tell whether it was Spain or Wyoming. . . . You
know, when you find your own country in Spain, how the Spaniards must
have felt finding their country in America and you know that you share a com-
mon physical knowledge, but I am kept from presuming on this by remem-
bering that none of my ancestors fought at the siege of Zaragoza, nor on the
walls at Pamplona, nor in the streets on the Dos de Mayo. . . . (Gal to DIA 79)

Hemingway finds his own experience of the Iberian Peninsula to be shaped
by his experience of Michigan and Italy, the other two peninsulas that he had
“loved like a fool,” before they had been spoiled (one by logging and develop-
ment, and the other by tourism and fascism). Reflecting upon this experience,
he writes: “I do not believe any more that if you want to care for anything
the best thing to care for is country” (Gal to DIA 78). Countries change, and
change equals loss. Not that this stopped Hemingway from falling in love
with Spain—for “as in all such things you cannot select what you will be fond
of. . . .” (Gal to DIA 78). But when Hemingway fell in love with Spain, it was
because something in the land and the culture spoke to something deep in him:
“Coming to Spain I found some of the things I believed in being practiced and
an opportunity to observe others and in addition I liked the bullfights and the
country and some of the people” (Gal to DIA 79). Hemingway’s ability to feel
at home in Spain and in so many other places was rooted at least in part in his
ability to find something of himself in these places.

This volume gathers an innovative collection of essays that explore
how Hemingway imagined Spain, and each of which asks that we imagine
Hemingway’s relation to Spain in a new way. Although the writers do address
Hemingway’s canonical fiction, challenging existing critical preconceptions,
these essays provide unprecedented focus on his lesser-discussed Spanish
works, which will introduce these neglected texts into twenty-first-century
considerations of Hemingway and Spain.

María DeGuzmán begins the volume by addressing the “blood and soil”
myth to bring multidimensionality to Hemingway’s notion of the Spanish
earth. DeGuzmán’s essay expertly draws from Hemingway’s career-long de-
piction of Spain, showing in particular how his Anglo-American characters
experience the fruits of Spain, its culture and natural resources. Lisa Twomey
follows by mining periodicals from the 1930s to gauge the Spanish reaction to
Death in the Afternoon, and she then extends the discussion through the rest
of Hemingway’s life. Through an incisive reading of these documents, a clearer
image emerges of Hemingway’s sometimes ambiguous reception in Spain.

Russ Pottle takes on “Hills Like White Elephants,” one of Hemingway’s
most anthologized stories, drawing from aspects of its composition to find
a complex allegory of tourism that has not previously been explored. Pottle’s assiduous investigation of the geography and culture of northern Spain allows the setting of the short story to emerge as thematically crucial to its meaning.

Ian Grody’s focus on Hemingway’s American novillero friend Sidney Franklin is the most extended treatment in Hemingway studies of this fascinating association and the development and ambiguity of the friendship. Grody argues that the Hemingway–Franklin relationship was reciprocal and mutually beneficial, and charts a detailed trajectory to the biography of this relationship.

Beatriz Penas Ibáñez begins our volume’s treatment of *Death in the Afternoon* by pairing it with its sequel, *The Dangerous Summer*. She discusses Hemingway’s return to Spain and his attempt to “correct a situation of exclusion” that would allow him to end his exile and return to a country he loved so dearly. Penas Ibáñez’s knowledge of the culture and history of Spain finds a dynamic interplay of memory between Hemingway’s disquisition on bullfighting in 1932 and its reconsideration in 1960.

Ben Stoltzfus triangulates a discussion of Hemingway’s Spain, focusing on the bullfighting as art, the artist as a matador, and both disciplines as dealing with the inevitable specter of death. Stoltzfus expands on these familiar themes through a discussion of the French writer Henry de Montherlant, as well as the notion of Mithraism, an ancient mystery cult that engaged in the slaying of bulls as a rite of initiation. David F. Richter also touches on the violent stakes of Hemingway’s bullfighting texts, using the writers Georges Bataille and Federico Garcia Lorca to invoke the *duende*, a spirit particular to Spanish culture that sheds light on the way Hemingway dealt with death and the bullfight. Richter’s essay identifies life within death and explores the importance of emotion and death in Spain and in Hemingway’s art.

Like Penas Ibáñez, Suzanne del Gizzo finds in Hemingway a disturbing, usually self-defeating trend in which Hemingway returns to “the old front,” a scene of success or emotionally potent experience from the past, and attempts to revive that original emotion. To del Gizzo, Hemingway is essentially “disavowing” or rejecting his current age and status and reality, forcing upon himself a problematic “nostalgia in reverse.”

James H. Meredith considers 1937 to be the hub of Hemingway’s Spanish experiences, and establishes the single year as a key pivot to his entire life and career. Meredith’s treatment of Hemingway’s crucible experience in the Spanish Civil War, places Hemingway’s Spanish works in a broader biographical context. Mark P. Ott continues the examination of this period of Hemingway’s life, tackling Hemingway’s “The Butterfly and the Tank” by placing the short story in the context of the dissolution of Hemingway’s relationship with John Dos Passos.
Hemingway’s political leanings are scrutinized in Scott D. Yarbrough’s essay, “The Education of Henry: Politics and Context in Hemingway.” Yarbrough engages in a reading of politics through an examination of Hemingway’s under-discussed Spanish Civil War stories, including “Under the Ridge,” “The Denunciation,” and “The Butterfly and the Tank.” These short stories, most of which have escaped critical attention, are also the topic of Michael Maiwald’s analysis. Like Yarbrough, Maiwald focuses on the maligned “Night Before Battle” and “Under the Ridge,” showing how a careful reading of those stories yield insights into Hemingway’s politics and into their broader historical context.

Lawrence R. Broer’s essay ends our volume with an extended meditation on *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, including his own lifelong relationship with the novel. Broer, who published the pioneering study, *Hemingway’s Spanish Tragedy* (U of Alabama P 1973) more than forty years ago, reflects on his engagement with Hemingway’s notion of Spain, the corrida, and death, paying particular attention to Robert Jordan, the hero of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

As Hemingway writes in the famous final chapter of *Death in the Afternoon*, “If [we] could have made this enough of a book it would have had everything in it” (270). It would have had “the Prado, looking like some big American college building. . . . Hadley, with the bull’s ear wrapped in a handkerchief. . . . the wooden ring at Alciras where they dragged the dead horses out in the field and you had to pick your way over them. . . . the storks on the houses in Barco de Avila. . . . cider in Bombilla and the road to Pontevedra from Santiago de Campostella” (270–71). It would have had Spain—or at least Hemingway’s Spain—in it. But that would be a tall order. Hemingway’s engagement with Spain was so complex, so visceral, so rich. Our hope is that by collecting new approaches to Hemingway’s classic works and exploring his comparatively neglected texts, this volume can help us to more deeply appreciate this engagement and better understand how Ernest Hemingway imagined Spain.
Notes

1. Many thanks to Robert Trogdon for this clarification.
3. The passages that I cite from the galleys to Death in the Afternoon have been previously published in Susan F. Beegel’s Hemingway’s Craft of Omission: Four Manuscript Examples (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1988).

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For expatriate U.S. modernists writing and publishing between the early 1920s and the late 1950s, Spain functioned not as a well-charted colony (that was reserved for France) but as a last frontier, a land to be discovered. As I argue in my 2005 book, *Spain’s Long Shadow: The Black Legend, Off-Whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire*, twentieth-century writers such as John Dos Passos, Waldo Frank, Gertrude Stein, and Ernest Hemingway, unlike nineteenth-century writers obsessed with racial origins and the physiognomic aspects of race, shifted away from a specifically racial typing of the inhabitants of Spain toward figuring them in relation to their country as land. Dos Passos in *Rosinante to the Road Again* (1922); Waldo Frank in *Virgin Spain: Scenes from the Spiritual Drama of a Great People* (1926; revised in 1942); Stein in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933) and *Picasso: The Complete Writings* (1934); Hemingway in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), the script for the film *The Spanish Earth* (1937), and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940); and even Richard Wright in *Pagan Spain* (1957) were primarily interested in Spain as land. Their writings engage with the idea of the Spanish land as a transforming force determining national character, temper, soul, or spirit; as raw material waiting to be transformed (redistributed, fertilized, and tilled); and, most significantly, as a medium helping them to vitalize their work. Spaniards usually figure as peasants, artisans, villagers, laborers, bullfighters, dancers, and guerrilla soldiers—representatives of a primal, “authentic” relationship to the land, if not actual embodiments of both its creative and destructive forces.
To U.S. expatriate modernists, Spain meant land, partly to compensate for their own uprootedness, and Spaniards, as “primitives” or elemental, were supposed to have an implicit connection to it. These modernists saw Spain as sacred terrain for a modern myth of the soil, a myth propagated against modernity’s own centrifugal and entropic forces. Spain, however, did not represent just any soil. Historically and symbolically, it was associated with the “discovery”—the conquest and colonization—of the greater part of the Americas by Europeans. Thus, it doubled both as symbol for and destination (if only metaphoric) of the poets, writers, discoverers, and creators of new worlds, of those trying to “make it new.” Spain became for these writers both a figurative and a very literal ground of experience upon which to constitute their art practices and their own identities as expatriate Americans or Americans abroad “making it new” again. In a world already old and mapped and increasingly mediated by the mechanisms of finance and technology, these modernists went to Spain on a simultaneously nostalgic/retrospective and future-oriented/prospective voyage toward a new frontier, a “last good country,” to use Hemingway’s phrase.

For Hemingway, this paradoxical project took the form of a reenactment of Anglo-American frontier values such as rugged individualism, courageous deeds, ritualized battles with nature (through bullfighting, hunting, and fishing) and with the “natives” (in the Spanish Civil War), camaraderie with male companions (the gang in The Sun Also Rises, guerrilla soldiers in For Whom the Bell Tolls), and what is coded as an authentic relationship with the soil (ingesting, like a peasant, the fruits of the earth; being baptized in bulls’ blood; getting covered with Spanish sand and dust; baking, like clay, in the Spanish sun). The land(s) of Spain and Spaniards became for Hemingway what the earth was for Antaeus, the giant who wrestled with Hercules and whose strength derived from his physical connection with his mother Earth. Hemingway’s Spanish venture partook of a visionary colonialism. Without staying and becoming permanently involved with the country and the people about whom he wrote, he used Spain as raw material for his retrospective liberalism. In a sense, he took the goods and ran: he went to Spain, mined it for its possibilities, and left its continuing problems for its inhabitants to handle. Ezra Pound once observed that Spain was “an emotional luxury to a gang of sap-headed dilettantes” (quoted in Cunard 27). The statement is harshly hyperbolic, but with a measure of truth in it. For all of their demonstrable experience of Spain, Hemingway’s “Spanish” novels—The Sun Also Rises and For Whom the Bell Tolls—can be centrally located within the parameters of Anglo-American imperial ideology.1 Hemingway’s passion for the Spanish earth and the mythic identification of his Anglo-American heroes with that dirt were steeped in a
blood and soil myth dependent on Heideggerian notions of authenticity. This myth, moreover, contained resonances of the blood and soil myth of fascist ideologies developing throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, ideologies that came to their horrific fruition in the later 1930s. Emmanuel Levinas writes of the “obsessive grip” of myths (Entre Nous 31) and of a desire to liberate humanity from the barbarism accompanying the resurgence of these myths that sacrifice human lives in the process of transmuting uniqueness, difference, and Otherness into a totalitarian Sameness.

As I argue in Spain’s Long Shadow, The Sun Also Rises and For Whom the Bell Tolls form two different stages of Hemingway’s mythic identification with Spain through the dramatized interaction between the man and Spain as earth or, more precisely, soil. The Sun Also Rises represents the first stage of the myth and For Whom the Bell Tolls, the second. The Sun Also Rises is all about choosing one’s “last good country,” and I mean this in an ideologically, geopolitically loaded way, not merely in the universalizing sense that Hemingway identifies, for example, in a letter to his editor, Maxwell Perkins, written 19 November 1926: “The point of the book [The Sun Also Rises] to me was that the earth abideth forever—having a great deal of fondness and admiration for the earth and not a hell of a lot for my generation. . . . I didn’t mean the book to be a hollow or bitter satire but a damn tragedy with the earth abiding for ever [sic] as the hero” (SL 229). Despite this universalizing moral, the contents of The Sun Also Rises are particularizing. The earth that is most revered is not just any earth, but the Spanish earth. Jake Barnes chooses Spain in contrast to his foil, the anti-Semitically debased Jew Robert Cohn. In the terms defined by language theorist and psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva, Cohn is the abject, the embodiment of all that is opposed to and inassimilable by the I (1)—an I embodied in The Sun Also Rises by Jake, the narrator. Finding himself in France, Cohn dreams of escaping to an idealized South America, yet never chooses to go there. In fact, Cohn seems incapable of commitment to either countries or women, or they to him. If The Sun Also Rises concerns choosing one’s “last good country,” For Whom the Bell Tolls is about “being there”—the choice already having been made—and about Robert Jordan, the Anglo-American hero with the promised-land last name, lying on his belly “on the brown, pine-needled floor of the [Spanish] forest” (FWTB1). Much can be said about Jake Barnes and Robert Cohn as foils, and about the significance of Cohn’s various attributes: his desire to go to South America, his book-knowledge, and his abjection as a kept man and as a man whom women leave. These attributes are closely contrasted to those of Jake: his choice of Spain, his alternation between correspondence (story writing, letter-writing, and telegrams) and physical activity, and the
somewhat mysterious injury that keeps Jake from being physically intimate, beyond an exchange of embraces or kisses, with anyone. Although it is Jake whom his friend Bill accuses of having “fake European standards” (SAR 115), it is to Robert Cohn that Hemingway attributes such inauthenticity. One might even add “fake expatriate U.S. modernist standards.” Expatriation seems to have generated in Hemingway a degree of private guilt, shading into public shame. In other words, Hemingway imagines Robert Cohn and deploys all the scenarios involving him both to allow Jake a relatively guilt-free experience of discovery and to grant the narrator an authentic relationship to the Spanish earth/soil, thus giving the narrative authenticity. “In Being and Time (1927), Martin Heidegger defines ‘authenticity’ as the condition of those who reflect on the identity they acquired at birth so as to critically assess the values and goals of that identity and ‘choose’ their own identity. . . . [furthermore,] for Heidegger, ‘being there’ passively is never enough” (DeGuzmán 217–18). One has to think and act to prove one’s authenticity. Hemingway seems to have constructed Jake Barnes under the weight of this injunction.

Levinas (who once began work on a book on Heidegger but abandoned it when Heidegger became involved with the Nazi Party) points out in his dialogic essay “Philosophy, Justice, and Love” that Heidegger’s writings were preoccupied with a particular setting for the demonstration of this authenticity: “Whatever the case may be, he [Heidegger] has a very great sense for everything that is part of the landscape; not the artistic landscape, but the place in which man is enrooted. It is absolutely not a philosophy of the émigré[.] I would even say that it is not a philosophy of the emigrant” (117). The Heideggerian hero is the enrooted man or the man who enroots himself, commits himself to a place. And, as Levinas also observes, that place is converted into a ground of being that becomes as important as, if not more important than, any particular human being. Heideggerian thought too easily accommodates itself to the dismissal or, perhaps more worrisome, to the dehumanization of the emigrant, the displaced person.

In offering up Robert Cohn as a foil to authenticity in The Sun Also Rises, Hemingway conceives him in disturbingly anti-Semitic terms that echo Heidegger’s. Published only a year after The Sun Also Rises, Being and Time suggests a broader context for concerns about authenticity and culture in the late 1920s and 1930s. The Sun Also Rises represents Hemingway’s expression of a broader concern with questions of authenticity among expatriate U.S. modernists and, moreover, of concern over these issues within an even wider European and Euro-American framework.
Anti-Semitism (or an enactment of it which is quite nearly indistinguishable from the complex itself) not only forms the backdrop of *The Sun Also Rises* and its presentation of an authentic relation to “country”—in which Cohn’s position as foil to Jake is constantly underscored by the anti-Semitism he endures—but also runs like a troublesome seam (not a mere thread) throughout the narrative from Jake’s observation in the book’s opening line—“Robert Cohn was once middleweight boxing champion of Princeton” (3)—to Brett’s statement summing up the bullfighter Pedro Romero’s personal effect on her: “I’m all right again. He’s wiped out that damned Cohn” (243). Add to that Jake’s reply approving Cohn’s erasure—“Good” (243)—and the story leaves readers and critics with precious little room for indulging in apologetics about the anti-Semitism, the continual Jew-baiting, in *The Sun Also Rises*. However, I do not call attention to this to take Hemingway to task; not only does such an exercise seem rather futile to me more than eighty-five years after the book’s publication, but also many other critics have already voiced such responses. In his 2006 article on Hemingway’s anti-Semitism and the representation of Robert Cohn, Jeremy Kaye documents much of this scholarship, as well as the scholarship that actually takes Cohn to task for not more adequately embodying a white, heterosexual masculine ideal. The critical contribution of Kaye’s article is his argument that Cohn’s role in the book is not entirely contained in and certainly not marginalized by anti-Semitic stereotype, but exceeds the supposed predictability of stereotype as a fetish entirely necessary and central to Jake’s sense of himself as the white, male hero. “Cohn’s presence—” Kaye writes, “indeed, his penis [the fact that he has one, unlike, everyone assumes, Jake]—allows Jake to deny his own castration (symbolic and literal) and project that lack onto Cohn’s Jewishness. In order for this denial to function, however, Jake must first identify with Cohn, because Cohn has the penis he needs, before he can reject him as a Jew, thereby disavowing Cohn’s importance in the making of his manhood” (53). I agree with much of the content of Kaye’s careful and illuminating analysis of the intersection of anti-Semitism and fictions of masculinity, but I differ from him on the relationship between stereotype and fetish. Unlike Kaye, I do not see stereotype in flat, predictable terms. The unsettling power of stereotypes lies in their dynamism, in their multidimensionality (which entails their functioning as fetish, if the occasion calls for it), and in their involvement or complicity with master narratives, with myths. *The Sun Also Rises* participates in this blood and soil myth by denying Cohn’s full humanity. He is reduced to something to be wiped out—a stain or a residue—rather than functioning as a character with subjectivity such as
Jake’s or even Brett’s. If represented as a person at all, he is typecast—defined by the role of the Other whose otherness does not (is not permitted to) elicit respect and responsibility for the Other on the part of the self (in, for instance, a Levinasian formulation). The narrative relegates Cohn to persecution or, at best, hostile indifference. He is expendable for the sake of the cause, the blood and soil myth. Though Jake and Brett would hardly seem to qualify as the proper protagonists for the blood and soil myth—being, as they are, obviously deracinated expatriates and imperfect specimens of humanity by the standards of those sorts of myths (Jake is an emasculated drunk and Brett is a consummately unfaithful woman who wanders from man to man)—their disqualification pales in comparison to Cohn’s, or that is how the story scripts the encounter between Cohn, Brett, and Jake. Cohn’s proximity inspires nothing but contempt. Cohn, dehumanized by the end of the narrative into “the human punching-bag” (SAR 199) (though the phrase is originally imputed to Jake), is not treated as a brother-in-arms. Jake and Brett reserve that treatment for each other. Beyond what might be construed as the mutual exclusivity of the couple (hardly exclusive in the case of Brett), the narrative as a whole excludes Cohn. If, as Levinas has argued, “the foundation of consciousness is justice” and “consciousness is born as the presence of the third party in the proximity of the one for the other,” The Sun Also Rises refuses to be (re)cognizant of Cohn in this way or to extend him justice (“Peace and Proximity,” 169). Instead, it traps itself in a closed-circuit and not very happy reciprocity between Jake and Brett, the not-quite-almost-sometimes couple who ride down the Gran Via in a taxi cab memorializing Madrid and their own relationship simultaneously.

What I mean by this double “memorializing” is that, after Jake drinks multiple bottles of rioja wine at lunch, he and Brett take a cab ride to “see Madrid” (SAR 246) and savor the “damned good time” (247) they could have had together—in other words, their relationship that was and was not. Feminist critic and philosopher Avital Ronell, in her 1992 book Crack Wars: Literature Addiction Mania, writes at length on the use of alcohol and other drugs by writers and in literature. According to her analysis, alcohol is deployed as part of a logic of preservationist, “resurrectionist memory”: “At one point Baudelaire seems to ask: whom are you preserving in alcohol? This logic called for a resurrectionist memory, the supreme lucidity of intoxication, which arises when you have something in you that must be encrypted. Hence the ambivalent structure stimulant/tranquilizer” (Ronell 5). The last scene of The Sun Also Rises encapsulates precisely this complex dynamic. Indeed, both Jake and Brett have plenty to encrypt, to encode in the sense of both burying and preserving—for example, all the things about which they cannot and do not speak directly,
including their unresolved relationship to each other and their questionable relationship, as wandering expatriates, to any given place. But, as the title of the novel constantly reminds readers, “the sun also rises.” What is buried and preserved will reemerge, will quite literally “rise” resurrected for us to behold, through the alchemical transfiguration of art (and, for Hemingway and for his protagonists, of alcohol coursing in the blood), casting a long shadow: that of the scapegoated figure of Robert Cohn.

The last actions of the novel are of the cab turning “out onto the Gran Via” (SAR 247), Brett remarking on the “damned good time” they could have had together, and a “mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic” and raising his baton, causing the cab to slow down suddenly and Brett to press against Jake in the back seat (247). Numerous readers and critics have read the scene as one more iteration of a phallic wish for sexual potency (the raised baton) that never materializes for Jake. Moreover, the scene affords an opportunity to inscribe Jake in a memorialization of Madrid and, by extension, Spain. The cab turns onto the Gran Via (literally, “the Great Road”), a main thoroughfare of Madrid graced by elegant nineteenth-century and turn-of-the-century buildings, hotels, movie theaters, and shops, and, to the west, leading down to the Plaza España, the plaza of Spain. In their preoccupation over Jake’s supposedly emasculating wound, critics have paid scant attention to the fact that the more corporeal coupling or connection occurs between Jake and the Spanish earth, the very dust of it. From this coupling Cohn is likewise excluded—in fact, he is depicted as far too bookish (9–12) and preppy-clean (45), capable only of second-hand or vicarious living.

I highlight the involvement of *The Sun Also Rises* in the blood and soil myth to explore what might otherwise appear to be an uncomplicated sensualist’s celebration of the Spanish earth through numerous descriptions of Spain’s landscape and earth and through the relationship that the narrative elaborates between Jake and, quite literally, the very dust of the Spanish earth. Dust is mentioned at the very first crossing from France into Spain. At the Spanish frontier, for example, “the guard spat in the dust” (92). The white road into Spain is a “dusty” one (93). Jake’s coat is “gray with dust” (96) by the time he and Bill arrive in Pamplona. The references to dust are scattered throughout the Spanish sections (105).

Valerie Hemingway—secretary to Ernest Hemingway, wife to Hemingway’s youngest son, Gregory, and a writer herself—remarks that Hemingway admired painters, especially the work of the French postimpressionists and their landscapes as well as that of the cubists:
Ernest drew our attention to his favorites and in particular to one Cézanne that had influenced his early work. He said then, as I had heard him say before, that he always tried to write as good as the best picture that was ever painted. (78)

... Again, Ernest told me that if he had not been a writer, he would have liked to have become a painter, and that his objective as a writer was to invent with words a world as real and innovative as that a painter conjured up with his brush. (138)

Certainly, a number of the descriptions of Spanish earth in The Sun Also Rises read like landscape paintings turned into words, a type of ekphrasis or ut pictura poesis. Some of the descriptions closely conform to pastoral landscape conventions, particularly as structured by postimpressionist techniques into distinct planes or color fields. For example: “We came down out of the mountains and through an oak forest, and there were white cattle grazing in the forest. Down below there were grassy plains and clear streams, and then we crossed a stream and...” (SAR 93).

But the narrative is not content to propel itself forward on these verbal landscapes. Instead, it must ritualize the relationship between Jake and the earth through a proliferating set of references to the very dust or dried soil of the earth and through Jake’s consumption and incorporation of its animals, crops, and fruits. Already in this 1926 novel Hemingway was attempting to find a solution to the voracious hunger for Spain and its land later articulated by the character Catherine Bourne in his posthumously published novel The Garden of Eden: “I never wanted to be a painter nor a writer until I came to this country [Spain]. Now it’s just like being hungry all the time and there’s nothing you can ever do about it” (53). Catherine makes this remark shortly after her husband, David, has stated: “They [the Spaniards] never did have landscape painters” (52), and she replies, “It’s terrible to have such a wonderful country and no good painters ever paint it” (52). Such passages from The Garden of Eden quite nakedly disclose Hemingway’s proprietary attitude toward Spain and the Spanish earth, “the last good country.” In The Sun Also Rises, Hemingway attains this country not only by painting with words, but through Jake ingesting—eating—Spain; in For Whom the Bell Tolls, he does so by having the Spanish earth incorporate his hero, Robert Jordan. Jake’s and Robert’s actions foreshadow those of Catherine and David Bourne in The Garden of Eden: while they converse about Spanish painting and wanting to paint the
Spanish earth, they are continuously eating and drinking the products of that earth—gazpacho soup and Valdepeñas wine.

Edible incorporation is one of the defining features of the second half of the mythic identification of Hemingway with Spain via his heroes, a feature that characterizes *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, published fourteen years after *The Sun Also Rises*. Carl Eby, who has written extensively about fetishism in Hemingway, follows the representation in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* of edible, erotic, and eroticized incorporation of food and people, and of people metaphorized into food through the lenses of Freudian psychoanalytic paradigms. In his highly incisive essay on the perversely sexualized pet name “little rabbit” given by Robert Jordan, the protagonist of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, to his love interest, Maria, Eby convincingly argues that the scenes of edible incorporation in this novel and other works by Hemingway are designed to ward off the fear of castration (210–11). I would add, in a more Lacanian vein, that these scenes are designed to ward off the fear of (or suspicion of) inadequacy and ineffectualness more generally—not only the personal inadequacy in author and protagonist (Hemingway and Robert Jordan) as men whose masculinity must be shored up, but also as U.S. men abroad who must ward off fears or charges of cultural inauthenticity as expatriates. These anxieties are likewise evident in *The Sun Also Rises*. Their manifestations are numerous, but one significant scene of anxiety implying that Jake may be as inadequate as he imagines Cohn to be unfolds in a conversation between these two characters about going to another country to live life more fully rather than waiting for death to catch them unawares. Cohn says that he wants to go to South America and Jake replies, “Listen, Robert, going to another country doesn’t make any difference. I’ve tried all that. You can’t get away from yourself by moving from one place to another” (*SAR* 11). Evidently, while Jake seems to be doing the same thing that he disparages Cohn for doing—going from one country to another (i.e., from the United States to France to Spain)—readers are not supposed to see Jake in this light. The narrative works to associate Jake’s itinerancy with seasoned experience and wisdom rather than with foolishness and vanity. Such passages underscore how far *The Sun Also Rises* is from an uncomplicated sensualist’s celebration of the Spanish earth. In this novel, the fabric of the mythic telluric identification of Hemingway with Spain is dependent from start to finish on an obsessive counter-myth: the myth of the abjected wandering Jew. This counter-myth is given concrete expression in the bespectacled though muscled personage of Robert Cohn, who is described first at Princeton, New Jersey, followed by Carmel, California; Provincetown, Massachusetts; and France; then back
in New York City; back in Paris wishing he were in South America; followed by San Sebastian, Spain; Bayonne, France; and finally Pamplona, Spain, where he descends into slapstick violence.

A central irony of the characterization of Robert Cohn is that movement from one country to another typified the lives and work of many expatriate U.S. modernists and, specifically, of Hemingway himself, who engaged with more countries than wives: Italy, France, Spain, Kenya, Cuba, and the United States. Thus, who is the “Cohn”—or the con-artist, if you will—in this scenario? The vehemence with which Robert Cohn must be continually abjected in *The Sun Also Rises*, so that Jake can be authenticized or validated in his choice of “the last good country,” reveals the instability of the first stage of Hemingway’s mythic identification with Spain: the choosing of the “last good country” and the association of the novel’s Anglo-American hero with Spain. By instability, I mean that the myth of choice and genuine association is haunted and shaken by that which has been constructed as opposed to it, by the *a* *b* *j* *e* *c* *t*—that which Kristeva defines as having the sole quality of “being opposed to I” (1). The “I”—or, in the case of *The Sun Also Rises*, the Jake-narrator—cannot abide the abject, cannot recognize it for fear not only of contamination, but of annihilation. The abject is the inassimilable and unacceptable part of the “I,” or of the narrator. As Kristeva observes of the functioning of the abject (consider Cohn cast as the “wrong kind of expatriate,” the “failed writer,” the “fake,” and so forth), “from its place of banishment, the abject does not cease challenging its master” (2) and threatening that master with annihilation of, among other things, his self-congratulatory narcissistic image of himself.

One way of viewing *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in the overall context of Hemingway’s engagement with Spain is as an attempt to complete the mythic/legendary identification of Hemingway with Spain through his Anglo-American heroes. The narrative endeavors to close the gap or the unstable relation between hero and earth/soil that can be detected in *The Sun Also Rises*. This view of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* as completing the mythic identification with Spain first expressed in *The Sun Also Rises* may not be initially apparent because they are quite different sorts of narratives. For example, *The Sun Also Rises* is written in the first person and moves from the recent past to the present, where it stays, flowing in a forward direction without much sense of a future or a far-distant past beyond Cohn’s college days or Jake’s involvement in World War I, where he received his defining wound. Simple dialogues and pared down descriptions of people, places, and actions characterize its narrative. The longest descriptions are of the Spanish land, of the Fiesta of San Fermín in Pamplona, and of the bullfights. *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, on the other hand, is written
in the third person, from the perspective of a selective-omniscient narrator whose line of sight is most closely aligned with the consciousness and actions of the Anglo-American hero, Robert Jordan. It is more than double the length of *The Sun Also Rises*. Moreover, the narrative moves backward and forward in much larger swathes of time than in *The Sun Also Rises*, as well as in much smaller increments (for instance, the famous “now” and “nowhere” passage of chapter 13). While the present action largely concerns waiting for the right hour to blow up a bridge, to accompany an attack on Segovia by the Loyalist forces fighting against Francisco Franco’s Nationalists, the spatiotemporal range of the novel is far more disparate and complex than that of *The Sun Also Rises*. In terms of present time, the novel deals with a mere four days until, as the Russian Comrade General Golz explains, “a stated hour based on the time set for the attack” (5). However, accounts are nested within accounts that weave together historical fact, fiction, and interpretation to portray and comment on many aspects of the Spanish Civil War (particularly brutality in the name of ideals that betrays these very ideals beyond recognition). Other aspects represented include the involvement in the Spanish Civil War of Russia, Italy, the United States, and other countries, and the more global struggle between fascism and other forms of political ideology and organization, such as communism. The novel also concerns itself with the relationship between the local and the national in Spain and Spanish culture as Hemingway conceived of these. In addition, readers find extensive representations of endgame ethical dilemmas involving allegiances and killing in war, hunting, and blood sports such as bullfighting. Finally, the novel offers a significantly lengthy meditation on language(s) and consciousness (318). Like a Russian novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is monumental in scale.

Yet, despite these major differences between the two novels, together they form the two stages of Hemingway’s mythic identification with the Spanish soil. By offering readers Robert Jordan, a committed, revitalized, nonimpotent version of Jake, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is plotted to overcome the inauthenticity that Cohn represents for Jake as the foil who follows him wherever he goes. Jordan performs several of the same actions that Jake does in the earlier novel. He ingests the food of Spain even more avidly than Jake; and given the scarcity of food during the Spanish Civil War, its presence in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* cannot be taken for granted, and thus its ingestion is raised to a kind of sacrament, shadowed by the very symbolic cannibalism that Eby mentions in his 1998 essay “Rabbit Stew and Blowing Dorothy’s Bridges: Love, Aggression, and Fetishism in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*”: the ingestion of more than food, of human flesh (215). As I point out in my book, “Some of the other guerrilla
fighters [Jordan’s compañeros] are portrayed as cold cuts: ‘Robert Jordan looked carefully at the other three men at the table. One had a large flat face, flat and brown as a Serrano ham’” (DeGuzmán 219). Jordan, like Jake, has physical contact with the Spanish soil, only in Jordan’s case it is not confined to dust and trout fishing. For Whom the Bell Tolls enacts nothing less than the bodily incorporation of its Anglo-American hero, Robert Jordan, into the Spanish earth both metaphorically and literally. Metaphorically, the fusion of his body with the Spanish earth/soil is accomplished through his romance with Maria, the young Spanish woman with whom he falls in love at first sight. Jordan addresses her in terms of one of the totem animals of Spain—a rabbit; Hispania signifies “land of rabbits,” after all. Maria and Jordan’s relationship with her are also figured in terms of land. When they make love, Jordan feels the earth move. Maria’s body is described in terms of land, earth: “her breasts like two small hills that rise out of the long plain where there is a well, and the far country beyond the hills was the valley of her throat where his lips were” (FWTB 341). The land described as part of a John Donne–like blazon of her body (one thinks here of Donne’s poem “To His Mistress Going to Bed”) corresponds to the description of the Spanish earth in For Whom the Bell Tolls and other works by Hemingway: hills, plains, valleys, the far country, and certain colors, such as tawny gold and red-gold. And this country (the obvious pun hardly needs to be indicated) lies there for him to claim, to merge with: “the valley of her throat where his lips were.” Which valley, whether of the throat or the delta of Venus, does not matter. The point is that Maria’s body is yet another site of signification for the desired Heideggerian integration of hero with place, for the enrooting of Robert Jordan.

Jordan’s bodily fusion with the Spanish earth also occurs literally in that he sleeps and dies on it. Hemingway often deploys a representation of sleep or sleeping as a prefigurement of death; he certainly does so in both The Sun Also Rises and For Whom the Bell Tolls. In the latter, the robe that Robert Jordan spreads on “the forest floor” and on which he and Maria sleep in chapter 7 foreshadows his final position in chapter 43 at the novel’s conclusion: “He was completely integrated now and he took a good long look at everything. . . . He was waiting until the officer reached the sunlit place where the first trees of the pine forest joined the green slope of the meadow. He could feel his heart beating against the pine needle floor of the forest” (471). Now as Jordan lies on the robe spread out on the forest floor, it is not Maria that he awaits but rather the fascist officer: as Jordan, fighting unconsciousness, shoots him, the officer will join him in death. The last image is of Robert Jordan’s “heart beating against the pine needle floor of the forest” (471). He is so close to the Spanish
earth that his heart is beating on it. And not only that: he is hemorrhaging internally from a broken leg, his blood pooling to merge with the earth, and it is highly likely that he will die of this injury where he lies. Even higher is the probability that he will be found and killed by the fascist forces moving through the forest, who will leave his body where it lies.

Death is a virtual certainty, an outcome that suits Hemingway’s purpose of stabilizing the claim to an authentic ground of being for this Anglo-American hero through Jordan’s coalescence with the Spanish earth. Commenting on Heidegger’s concept of authenticity in the face of the mediocrity or, at the very least, the pressure of the group’s thoughts, Levinas focuses on death or the willingness to die as the Heideggerian litmus test of consciousness against the domination of the self-compromising presence of “they” in that consciousness. According to Levinas, the departure from this “they” is, for Heidegger, “brought about by a resolved and free determination made by being-there which is thus being-for-death, anticipating death in the courage of anxiety. In the courage of anxiety, not in the fear and evasions of the everyday! Perfect authenticity!” (“Philosophy, Justice, and Love” 214). Significantly, in the concluding scene of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Robert Jordan is alone. He has told his comrades to move on without him, since his mortal wound has made him a liability to them, and he refuses to be the occasion of their capture or death. Not only does he refuse to allow his needs to compromise their lives but, furthermore, he does not want his care of and fear for them to compromise the actions that he feels he must take to combat the fascist forces. For example, to Maria, who does not want to abandon him in his terribly damaged state, he says: “What I do now I do alone. I could not do it well with thee” (*FWTBT* 463). And so he sends her away, too—although, aside from his decision to die at the hands of the enemy, his decision to do so is the most painful he must make.

He rejects several choices: he does not hide or shoot himself or have one of his comrades shoot him to evade the more than unpleasant contingencies of capture—probably torture and/or eventual execution if he were to survive the wounds he has already received. Instead, he waits “until the [fascist] officer reached the sunlit place where the first trees of the pine forest joined the green slope of the meadow” (471). The reader is left with the definite impression that Jordan will shoot that officer, when, ironically, he reaches his place in the sun, so to speak. And the shooting of the officer most certainly will draw down enemy fire on Jordan. The detail of Jordan’s beating heart viscerally reminds readers of the intensity of anguish and anxiety anyone in Jordan’s situation would be experiencing. The narrative deliberately aligns readers’ sensibilities with that wrackingly fragile yet persistent heart “beating against the pine needle floor
of the forest” (471). The last lingering impression is that a sacrifice is about to take place. Jordan’s heart (in every sense of the word) has been laid upon the sacrificial altar of the Spanish earth.

*For Whom the Bell Tolls* revisits the logic of the scapegoat and reverses the formula of *The Sun Also Rises*. A scapegoat is an animal or person on whose head the sins of the people are symbolically or metaphorically placed, after which the animal or person is ostracized from the community and made to wander (and die) in the wilderness. The scapegoat bears the blame for others and is generally the object of an irrational hostility. Robert Cohn is made to play this role in *The Sun Also Rises* and the narrative extends him no sympathy for it. He truly is a scapegoat both intranarratively and metanarratively. The characterization and portrayal of Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* inverts the Cohn model, however. Cohn is the scapegoat for all the U.S. expatriates who do not have an authentic relationship with the Spanish land/earth/soil. Ultimately, he is symbolically ejected from what is represented as the very heart of Spanish culture—the world of bullfighting. In Brett’s eyes, Pedro Romero cancels him out. Robert Jordan, on the other hand, becomes the perfect animal sacrifice for the cause of the Republic and for the good of the Spanish earth. His foil is Pablo, the head of the guerrilla band, who is losing belief in the cause if it means his death. The contrast between Robert Jordan and Pablo is much more stable, less unambiguously drawn, than the one between Jake Barnes and Robert Cohn, in which Cohn functions like Jake’s disavowed shadow, or Shadow in the Jungian sense. Worth noting is that Cohn is presented as a boxer, so it is entirely appropriate to imagine a shadow-boxing relationship between Jake and Cohn.

Even though the contrast between Pablo and Robert Jordan is more stable, however, Pablo is no small foil. Jordan’s first words about him are that he has heard that he is an “excellent guerilla [sic] leader,” “loyal to the republic,” that he proves his “loyalty through . . . acts,” and that he is “a man both serious and valiant” (*FWTBT* 10). Yet over the course of the narrative, Pablo is depicted as territorial, distrusting, cynical, cruel, and a drunkard, unable to share power when he should, treacherously capable of deserting or selling out from a gloomy disillusionment with the cause (128), and, worst of all, afraid to die and superstitious on account of this fear (250). Anselmo, the old man and the cicerone of the guerrilla band, delivers the most damning description of Pablo in three short sentences: “But since a long time he is *muy flojo* . . . He is very flaccid. He is very much afraid to die” (26). The insult to Pablo’s masculinity is evident in that adjective *flaccid*. He is presented as the failed site of phallic power. Ultimately, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* equates this fear of death with the
opposite of being a “good man,” a “very serious man” (46). Pablo is rendered not man enough to willingly sacrifice himself. Robert Jordan, on account of his death and imminent thanatopic merger with the soil of Spain, proves that he is a worthy hero and as true a “patriot” of this “last good country” as can be found.

*For Whom the Bell Tolls* did seal the mythic identification of Hemingway with Spain. The alchemical fusion of Robert Jordan and Maria, the Spanish woman, whose body was brown like the earth and golden like the fields of grain, as well as the powerful opening and closing descriptions of Robert Jordan’s visceral contact with “the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest” (1), did, in fact, do the trick. Expatriate U.S. modernist Hemingway and his Anglo-American heroes were, by and large, accepted in the United States, in Spain itself, and elsewhere as legitimate insiders rather than merely as tourists, informants, or visionary colonialists (part of Pound’s “gang of sap-headed dilettantes” [quoted in Cunard 27]). In *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the desire for this insider status flashes across Jordan’s mind as when he tells Pilar, “That I am a foreigner is not my fault. I would rather have been born here” (15). Jordan labors to be accepted as an insider. He does so through his actions as lover and brother-in-arms. Jordan’s willing death for the cause of the Republic but even more this merger of man with the last good country seals and sealed the deal.

This does not mean that this mythic identification with Spain and the Spanish earth did not prompt critical reactions. In some cases, as I mention in *Spain’s Long Shadow*, the dirt of Spain clung too well to Hemingway and the protagonists that functioned as his surrogates, drawing down on him criticism and jokes, including the charge that he was a “primitive” man, a cave-dweller (his character Robert Jordan spends most of his time in a cave), a bellowing bull, or (in Wyndham Lewis’s phrase) a “dumb ox”—a beast with four hooves in the dust (DeGuzmán 223–24). For the most part, however, the myth has been wildly successful. The legend lives on, and to this day generates many a Hemingway-inspired pilgrimage to Pamplona, San Sebastian, Madrid, and the town of Ronda, cradle of the telluric art of the bullfight.

I have presented the two progressive stages of the myth of the identification of the Hemingway hero and Hemingway with Spain, with the second stage completing what was initiated in the first. But, one might well wonder if the success of Hemingway’s mythic identification with Spain did not and does not still require both steps equally: is the jaded expatriate Jake as crucial to the redeemer/redeemed Jordan as Jordan is to fulfilling the longing for connection with Spain that Jake expresses by his gesture of running his fishing rod case through the Spanish dust? Of course, since Jake and Jordan are only characters
on the pages of two separate novels, they know nothing of one another. So this question is directed at readers and those who have participated in some way in the Hemingway myth of identification with Spain. This participation takes any number of forms. For instance, there are those who have read *The Sun Also Rises* and felt a subsequent urge to attend San Fermín or visit Pamplona. Others have sought to link Hemingway’s descriptions of places and events of the Spanish Civil War to physical locations outside Madrid. And there are those scholars who have attended conferences on Hemingway’s work and found themselves mimicking the itineraries and habits of the expatriates in Spain, as described by Hemingway. As John W. Aldridge has pointed out, for example, “F. Scott Fitzgerald dubbed Ernest Hemingway’s [*The Sun Also Rises*] ‘a romance and a guidebook’” (123). Allyson Nadia Field expands on these recessed observations in her essay “Expatriate Lifestyle as Tourist Destination: *The Sun Also Rises* and Experiential Travelogue of the Twenties”: “Hemingway was reputedly disdainful of tourists, yet . . . repetition of place names [in *The Sun Also Rises*] is organized into itineraries similar to those of travel guides contemporaneous to the novel. While not explicitly a guidebook, [the novel] can be considered as part of the tradition of travelogues . . . that offer experiential guides to a lifestyle, rather than to monuments or museums” (29–30). Field’s article focuses on Hemingway’s commodification of Paris and the codification of his experience that would allow legions of readers to easily reproduce it. A similar argument can be made about the rendition of experiences of Spain in *The Sun Also Rises*, despite its preoccupation with *afición* and authenticity.

The fact of the matter is that the jaded character of Jake, who narrowly saves himself from being just another dilettantish expatriate by demonstrating a visceral attachment to the Spanish dust and to the art of bullfighting—by showing, in other words, some *afición* and thus authenticity—is also the Jake who likes to eat, drink, and take in the sights. Jake of *afición* is also Jake the tourist, very much the tourist, though the novel attempts in many ways to attribute more gravitas to him than to the other expatriates. Readers follow and even imitate Jake the tourist and Jake the hedonist. Precious few would want to step into his shoes otherwise—into the shoes of the war-wounded, emasculated Jake who pines after a Brett always somewhat out of reach and certainly beyond keeps. For the most part, readers have not followed and would rather not follow in the footsteps of Robert Jordan, whose trajectory is far more dire than Jake’s—who must live his life “all the way up” (*SAR* 10) in four short days and then die among the pines of Spain. Though many readers may have fantasized about being a hero as Robert Jordan is, most readers have not wanted to share his fate, or his fatal wound. Thus the appeal of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* as a
tourist or lifestyle guidebook is limited, although it did manage to become a kind of alternative “history book” on the Spanish Civil War.

While within the framework of the Hemingway narrative Jake is not the ideal hero through which to achieve integration with the Spanish earth (and Robert Jordan is), beyond that framework—beyond the covers of the books—Jake is indispensable to the creation and maintenance of the Hemingway-inspired tourist industry. Jake’s experiences provide the less daunting, more easily reproducible template for pleasurable or business contact with Spain. Unlike Robert Jordan, Jake stays in hotels, goes fishing, swimming, and hiking, and attends bullfights. He eats hearty meals free from fear or the anticipation of enemy fire. He travels around from San Sebastian to Burguete to Pamplona to Madrid. Hemingway provides a great deal of detail about where Jake and his friends reside, eat, and drink, exactly what they consume, and their modes of transportation. Though the novel is obsessed with distinguishing the real from the fake, the original from the copy, and in achieving authenticity, it codifies its rituals and makes them eminently reproducible. Readers have not hesitated to reproduce the experiences described in *The Sun Also Rises*. The novel rails against the practice of getting ideas out of books, but it accommodates itself to just such a practice at every turn. Its success as a guidebook or tourist travelogue can be demonstrated by the number of places in Spain with placards referring to Hemingway’s historical presence at one time or another in particular locations.

The mythic identification with Spain by both Hemingway and his heroes needed the cynical half-hedonistic, half-stoic Jake at least as much as it needed the committed hero Robert Jordan. And along with Jake comes Cohn because, unlike Jordan’s relation to Pablo, from whom he is clearly distinguished by the end of the novel and who forms no part of the Robert Jordan–Maria couple, Cohn—that much disliked and yet somewhat envied wealthy cosmopolitan—is with Brett and Jake in their imaginations to the end of *The Sun Also Rises*. On the final five pages of the novel, as Jeremy Kaye has remarked (53–54), they are still preoccupied with Cohn and whatever failures and abjections he represents in the face of their own rather conventional desires for fulfillment and authenticity. Hence, Brett may claim, “I’m all right again. He’s [the bullfighter Pedro Romero] wiped out that damn Cohn” (SAR 243), but actually the Cohn specter remains, or no such exorcising statement would be necessary. What does the specter of Cohn represent to Jake and to Brett? To Jake, Cohn seems to represent failed manhood and yet also masculinity that might, or perhaps even has, usurped his. After all, despite various failings, Cohn did have an affair with Brett, against which Jake’s highly ambiguous relationship with her
stands in painful contrast. For Brett, Cohn represents failed romance. He fell in love with her and “his tennis game went all to pieces” (45). She never fell in love with him. His existence in her life underscores her penchant for not loving the men she can have and who she permits to keep her with their money until she discards them—Count Mippipopolous (53), Mike Campbell, Cohn himself—and for falling in love with men she knows from the outset that she cannot have or will not retain: Jake and Pedro Romero.4 For Brett, Cohn attests to her banal compromises with life, her weary worldliness, her inability to choose what she really desires, perhaps even her inability to wholeheartedly want her desire in the way that Pedro Romero displays his profound afición, his passion.

**Notes**

This essay is dedicated to my friend and colleague Linda Wagner-Martin for her suggestion that I attend and present at the 12th International Hemingway Conference in Malaga and Ronda, Spain, June 25–30, 2006. I thank her and the people I met there for a memorable time. As the title indicates, I wish this essay to serve as a continuation of and companion piece to the section on Hemingway in the chapter “Sacred Bulls of Modernism” from my book *Spain’s Long Shadow: The Black Legend, Off-Whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire.*

1. For a detailed explanation of this, see *Spain’s Long Shadow.*

2. I maintain that “typecast” or “stereotype” and the psychocultural emotional ambivalence to which one is subject as someone else’s fetish are not mutually exclusive roles and can work in tandem with one another.

3. Here I allude to William Cullen Bryant’s poem “Thanatopsis.”

4. Whether Brett has ever fallen in love with Jake remains unclear throughout the narrative. Despite all her affairs, she clearly feels some kind of passion for him and she returns to him intermittently. Early on in the story, she says to Jake, “Love you? I simply turn all to jelly when you touch me” (*SAR* 26).

**Works Cited**

